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Navy Entomology Center of Excellence's Update on West Nile Virus

Filed under FLEET AND THE FLEET MARINE FORCE

(NO COMMENTS)

Lt. Jen Wright, Navy Entomology Center of Excellence



Lt. Jennifer Wright is working with Lee County Florida Mosquito Control District personnel bleeding sentinel chickens as part of a West Nile Virus Surveillance program (with Lee County Mosquito Control District). (Photo courtesy of Navy & Marine Corps Public Health Center)

The United States is experiencing the greatest outbreak of West Nile Virus (WNV) since its initial introduction in New York during the summer of 1999. A total of 1,590 cases of WNV cases have been reported with 66 of those cases resulting in death according to the Center for Disease Control (CDC) as of Aug. 28, 2012. The state of Texas has been the hardest hit with nearly half of all reported cases and deaths occurring in the Lone Star State.

The WNV symptoms are similar to the flu and often include high fever, headache, neck stiffness, tremors and muscle weakness. Many individuals may be infected with WNV and never know it. However, in approximately 1

in 150 people with WNV experience severe symptoms to include neurological disorders, convulsions, loss of vision and even death. Effective methods to reduce exposure to mosquitoes carrying WNV include application of 25-30 percent DEET on exposed skin and treat clothing with permethrin, especially during early and late evening hours. Be sure to wear long sleeved light colored shirts and pants whenever outdoors or in places where mosquitoes may be present. Stay indoors during peak mosquito activity times such as dawn and dusk and be sure to check that window and door screens are in good repair. In addition, homeowners should ensure areas around their homes are free of standing water, especially open containers that often serve as breeding grounds for immature mosquitoes.

The Navy Entomology Center of Excellence (NECE) serves as subject matter experts for surveillance and control of mosquito and other blood feeding insects that transmit human disease to include WNV. This center of mosquito experts provide vector surveillance and control training to civilian and Department of Defense (DoD) technicians who are responsible for ensuring disease vectors are monitored throughout U.S. DoD installations throughout the world. Since 1999 the Navy and DoD partners have conducted a multidisciplinary WNV training, as well as surveillance and response efforts to protect force health and readiness. Centrally developed guidelines have been designed and activities

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implemented to characterize WNV exposure and transmission risk and to prevent WNV infection in DoD personnel. Activities are coordinated through active communication and, where needed, task sharing. All surveillance findings are shared with DoD commands as well as public health officials.

Recently NECE sent two Entomologists and two Preventative Medicine Technicians to Lee County Mosquito Control District, in Lehigh Acres, Fla., to learning cutting edge mosquito and disease surveillance techniques from the country’s most hi-Tech control District. There NECE personnel completed aerial and ground mosquito larvae surveillance and adulticide application utilizing helicopters, DCO aircraft, ditch trucks, airboats and boats as part of a comprehensive mosquito control program

To prevent mosquitoes from breeding around your home be sure to dump water from any containers around your home. It is especially important during the rainy season since many disease vectoring mosquitoes prefer to breed in small containers near human dwellings.

For more information see the [Centers for Disease Control](#).

For questions concerning mosquitoes, ticks or other pests, please contact the [Navy Entomology Center of Excellence](#).

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